ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for selectively logically adding storage to a host features

5   dynamically mapping one or more disk volumes to the host using a storage virtualization

layer, without affecting an operating system of the host or its configuration. Storage devices

participate in storage area networks and are coupled to gateways. A boot port of the host is

coupled to a direct-attached storage network that includes a switching fabric. When a host

needs storage to participate in a virtual server farm, software elements allocate one or more

10   volumes or concatenated volumes of disk storage, and command the gateways and switches

in the storage networks to logically and physically connect the host to the allocated volumes.

As a result, the host acquires access to storage without modification to a configuration of the

host, and a real-world virtual server farm or data center may be created and deployed

substantially instantly.

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